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A. M. D. G.

OLD IRISH LITANY

OF THE

Blessed Virgin.

(*Catholic University of Ireland Calendar for 1867-8.*)

THE Rector of the University, having in the year 1862, supplicated our Most Holy Father, Pope Pius IX., that he would graciously attach Indulgences to the following Prayer, or Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which is believed to be as old, at least, as the middle of the Eighth Century, and which had been rescued from oblivion, a short time previously, by the late lamented Professor Eugene O'Curry, His Holiness issued the following Brief on the 5th September, 1862 :—

[TRANSLATION.]

“PIUS PP. IX.

“FOR A PERPETUAL RECORD.

“Our beloved Son, Monsignor Bartholomew Woodlock, one of our Chamberlains of Honour, and Rector of the Catholic University in the City of Dublin, has lately caused to be laid before Us, a certain Pious Prayer, or Form of Supplication, to the Honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the beginning of which is, in the English tongue—‘O Great Mary! O Mary Greatest!’—in the Italian language, ‘O Maria, eccelsa Signora;’ and has also caused it to be set forth to Us, that it was lately recovered from oblivion by one of the Professors of the said University, and that it is the same which used to be recited in the Churches by the Irish

faithful in their primitive language from the most remote period. But, now, Our aforesaid beloved Son has caused Us to be informed that he himself, and very many others, have it extremely at heart that, with the view of increasing more and more, in the minds of Christ's faithful of Ireland, piety and devotion towards the Immaculate Mother of God, We should vouchsafe, of Our Apostolic favour, to unlock the heavenly treasures of Indulgences for the faithful who shall recite that prayer. We, who regard with fatherly charity, and *special good will*, all Christ's faithful of Ireland, from whom We have always had peculiar proofs of dutiful service towards this Holy See, have been pleased to meet the prayers they have addressed to Us, and to grant Indulgence as below.

“Wherefore, unto all and singular the faithful of Christ of either sex, now or temporarily residing in Ireland, being at least contrite in heart, who shall on any day devoutly recite the aforesaid Prayer, translated into whatsoever language, provided only the version be faithful, whereof We have ordered a copy, written in the English and Italian languages, to be kept in the Registry of the Briefs of Our Secretary's Office,

“We, relying on the mercy of the Almighty God, and by the authority of His Apostles, the Blessed Peter and Paul, do remit, in the wonted form of the Church, on the day whereon they shall do this, One Hundred Days from

penances enjoined, or otherwise in what manner soever due, of which relaxations of penances, We grant also in the Lord, the application, by way of suffrage, to the souls of Christ's faithful, who shall have departed from this life united in charity to God. Anything making to the contrary notwithstanding. These presents to hold to all future times.

"And We will have precisely the same confidence which would be accorded to these presents, if they were exhibited or shown, to be accorded to translations or copies, even printed, of the present Letters, inscribed by the hand of some public notary, and furnished with the seal of a person placed in an ecclesiastical dignity.

"Given in Rome, at St. Peter's, under the Ring of the Fisherman, 5th day of September, 1862, in the 17th year of Our Pontificate.

✠ "B. CARD. BARBERINI."

Concordat cum Originali.

✠ E. M'CABE,

VIC. CAP.

Of this Litany a learned and venerable Father, who has long been Professor of the Sacred Sciences in the Grand Séminaire at Montauban in France, thus writes :—

“*Montauban, 3 Fevrier, 1879.*

“Les antiques Litanies de la catholique Érin m’ont vivement intéressé: voilà encore une des mille réponses aux ineptes sottises de l’hérésie. (*Such as the theory of St. Patrick’s being a Protestant, which is here alluded to.*)

“Ce monument est d’un grand prix. Nous en avons fait faire la traduction française: elle sera utile à la piété des fidèles, et très-opportune dans la controverse *De cultu sanctorum*.

“DAMASE PUJOL, S.J.”

F. Whyte also writes :—

“*New York, 19th Feb., 1879.*

“This litany disposes well of the theory as to the early Protestantism of Ireland.

“When you send me a copy of the Gaelic original of the litany, I will take means to have it widely circulated. You must know, that at this present moment we have in New York several large classes organised for the purpose of preserving and learning and spreading, far as possible, the old Irish tongue. These classes are taught by competent men. I mean to have the litany printed in Gaelic, and placed before these classes. It will thus be more acceptable and better appreciated.

“RICHARD J. WHYTE, S.J.”

THE ORIGINAL IRISH.

Δ ἡμῆς μόρ,
Δ ἡμῆς ἱρ μό νοῖα ἡμῆς,
Δ Ρο μόρ να m-ban,
Δ Ριζαῖν να n-ainzel,
Δ Ὑαντιζερνα ἰνο nime,
Δ Ὑεν λάν οὑρ φορ-λάν ὁ ραῖτ ἰν ρριμτα νόιμ,
Δ Ὑενοαῖτα οὑρ Δ ριο-Ὑενοαῖτα,
Δ ἡμῆς να ζλόιρ ρυῖαίρ,
Δ ἡμῆς να h-eclaire neimta οὑρ ταιμῆντα,
Δ ἡμῆς να βάιρ οὑρ ἰνο λοζαῖρ,
Δ ἡμῆς να ρολλρ φορορταῖ,
Δ Ονοῖρ ἰνο εἰεοῖρ,
Δ Κομῆρτα να ρεῖνῆ,
Δ Ὅορρ nime,
Δ Κοῖρτα ὀρταῖ,
Δ Λερα να βάιρ οὑρ να τρῶαίρ,
Δ Τεμπαῖλ να οἰαοαῖτα,
Δ ἡμῆς να n-oz,
Δ Ὑαντιζερνα να ciuuo,
Δ Τορταῖρ να λυβζορτ,
Δ Ζλαναο να peccaō,
Δ Νιζε να n-anmano,
Δ ἡμῆς να n-oilliuῖτα,
Δ Ἰῖ να νόρδεν,
Δ Κομοῖγναο να τρυαζ,
Δ Ρεῖλα να μαρτα,
Δ Ἰυμῶλ Δέ,
Δ ἡμῆς Χρίρτ,
Δ Διρναρταῖρ ἰν κοῖμνῶο,
Δ Ἰρυῖαῖ ἰμαρ ὀolum,
Δ Σοῖρταῖρ μαρ ἐρτα,

At the request of Religious Communities desirous of having this venerable litany sung, a Latin version has been prepared—that language being, in their judgment, more readily susceptible of musical adaptation.

LATIN VERSION

Maria magna,
 Maria inter Marias maxima,
 Maxima in mulieribus,
 Regina Angelorum,
 Domina cœlorum,
 Mulier plena Spiritus Sancti gratia,
 Beata et beatissima,
 Mater æternæ gloriæ,
 Mater Ecclesiæ cœlestis et terrestis,
 Mater amoris et clementiæ,
 Mater lucis aureæ,
 Decus cœli,
 Prœnuntia pacis,
 Janua cœli,
 Arca aurea,
 Throne amoris et misericordiæ,
 Sacrarium Deitatis,
 Decor virginum,
 Domina tribuum,
 Fons hortorum,
 Purgatio delictorum,

Ablutio animarum,
 Mater orphanorum,
 Nutrix lactentium,
 Refugium miserorum,
 Stella maris,
 Ancilla Dei,
 Mater Christi,
 Sedes Divinitatis,
 Formosa ut columba,
 Pulchra ut luna,
 Electa ut Sol,
 Deletio ignominiaë Evæ,
 Reparatio vitæ,
 Perfectio mulierum,
 Primaria inter virgines,
 Hortus conclusus,
 Fons signatus,
 Mater Dei,
 Virgo perpetua,
 Virgo sancta,
 Virgo prudens,
 Virgo benigna,
 Virgo casta,
 Templum Dei viventis,
 Solium regis æterni,
 Habitaculum Spiritus Sancti,
 Virgo de radice Jesse,
 Cedrus Libani,
 Cypressus Montis Sion,
 Rosa purpurea terræ Jacob,
 Ferax ut oliva,
 Florens ut palma,
 Puerpera inclita,

Lux Nazareth,
 Gloria Jerusalem,
 Ornamentum mundi,
 Nobilissima in Christi populo,
 Regina vitæ,
 Scala cœli.

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✠ EDVARDUS,

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xxiv Sept., 1879.

J. M. J.